(b) whether Government propose to put forth a new definition of literacy while changing the said criteria;

(c) whether Government propose to bring a bill in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) There is no provision in the Cosntitution of India for terming someone as literate.

(b) to (d) The National Literacy Mission has defined the desired level of competencies in respect of reading, writing and numeracy, which is required for a person to be literate. As these competencies have been found to be adequate, there is no proposal to revise the same.

Scaling up of higher education fees

1368. SHRI P. R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Planning Commission has recommended scaling up of higher education fees; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and his Ministry's reaction to the commission's suggestions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) In the Mid Term Appraisal of Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) of the Planning Commission mentions the enhancement of fees in universities, "along with substantial increase in public funding, in order to meet the demands of increased access/enrolment and quality improvement." The Mid Term Appraisal also suggests that "substantial increase in fees combined with, an aggressive means-based scholarship and loan programme, is urgently needed to improve the resource position of universities and colleges." The Ministry has already accepted the recommendation of the report of the CABE Committee on "Financing of Higher and Technical Education" that "revenue generation through student fees beyond 20 per cent may seriously affect access to higher education."